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Muslims and Christians, Partners of the Future

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Addresses by

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FOREWORD

Each year the American Friends of the Middle East, Inc., holds a conference in January. These annual conferences have become well known because Americans and Middle Easterners from many parts of the country come together at this time to hear authorities on the Middle East and to discuss new trends and new developments in this important area of the world.

The theme of this year's conference was "America Takes a New Look at the Middle East." To develop this theme several panel sessions were included in the program. Educators, students, businessmen, diplomats and others participated enthusiastically and by contributing their knowledge made these discussions stimulating and rewarding.

A special feature of the 1955 conference was the Muslim-Christian Luncheon. As a result of the Muslim-Christian Convocation, held in Bhamdoun, Lebanon, in 1954, there has been an increasing desire on the part of Muslims and Christians to come to a better understanding. Therefore, at this luncheon a Muslim and a Christian addressed the gathering. What they said is contained in full in this publication.

ERICH W. BETHMANN

June, 1955

MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIP

By
Dr. Mahmoud F. Hoballah

And dispute not with the People of the Book except by what is best, save those of them who act unjustly, and say: we believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you, and our God and your God is but one God and to Him we submit and surrender.
— SURA 29:46

The significance of this Qur'anic passage is obvious—it is relevant to our subject of today for it determines, from the Muslim point of view, the relation which should exist between Muslims and Christians, not at a particular moment of history but as long as they exist.

The tension pervading the whole world is daily increasing. The world is threatened by complete destruction. The present civilization built by mankind through great toil and manifold hardship is in danger. We are in a period of great struggle, a struggle which appears to many as merely a struggle between different ideologies, while in reality it is more basic. It is a struggle between mind and matter, between subject and object, or between person and thing. Which of the two is of greater value in the Universe? Are things supposed to be in the service of man or is man supposed to be subservient to money, wealth and material powers? Or ultimately, what is of greater value, a moral Universe governed according to eternal design and regulated by the will of God, a place where man can freely express his own thoughts and within certain limitations satisfy his impulses and fulfill his purpose as a physical and spiritual being, or a sensuous and momentary Universe in which man becomes mere physical energy with no thought to express, no desire to satisfy, and no future to anticipate?

This intense struggle has stimulated the minds of many sincere thinkers trying to find a way out. Some sought it in commercial enterprises and free markets. Others in the equal distribution of wealth or in offering equal chances to each individual. Again, others thought an international police force would be the answer. These and similar possibilities have been explored, but were found wanting. The failure of the previous League of Nations still is not forgotten

and the inability of the present United Nations organization to implement, or to make effective its decisions, is apparent. Yet there is another promising possibility which is not yet fully explored and that is intellectual and spiritual cooperation and understanding between different individuals and nations. This allows man to appreciate and even help promote the cultures and interests of others though they may have different cultures, different religions, and different historical backgrounds. In other words, each individual should value other individuals first as persons, regardless of any other consideration. Is it possible for those who accept the authority of God as final to come to a mutual understanding whereby they can assure every individual the right to freely exercise his own conscience? This is our theme of today. The present world situation is but a practical challenge to God-fearing peoples.

Being conscious of God, Muslims and Christians ought to face this universal challenge with determination and fortitude. They ought to remember that it is their duty to come together, if for no other reason, than to rescue the religious legacy from destruction, the legacy which has been handed to them from their ancestors.

The call for Muslim-Christian cooperation was uttered with great emphasis some 1,400 years ago by the religion of Islam. It is expressed in various forms in the pages of the Holy Qur'an and its echo daily leaves fresh imprints in the hearts of the 500 million Muslims scattered all over the globe. The daily call to prayer is a religious attitude deeply ingrained in their hearts. They will never be reluctant to take their full share of responsibility for the creation of a better moral Universe, in which justice shall prevail, when the hands of cooperation are stretched out. They have to do so in order to be Muslims at all.

Many scholars of Muslim and non-Muslim faiths alike have tackled the important question of Muslim-Christian relations, but more frequently from the extrinsic rather than the intrinsic point of view—from its expediency value. It is advantageous, they say, to both Muslims and non-Muslims at this crucial point of history to forget past grievances and come to a mutual understanding and cooperate if they wish to be and survive at all. The Qur'an, however, did not deal with this vital question from this narrow point of view. It dealt with it not only from its extrinsic, but also from its intrinsic and inherent values. The roots for Muslim-Christian cooperation are much deeper and go beyond the detected and apparent benefits. Much stronger and more appealing common ground exists as the real basis for such cooperation.

Nearly 1,400 years ago, when it was revealed, the Qur'an invited the peoples of the Book to come to common terms with the Muslims and form a united front for the betterment of the world. It proclaimed:

> *O, People of the Book! Come to a just understanding between us and you; that we worship none but God, that we associate no partners with Him, and that we erect not from ourselves lords and patrons other than God; if then they turn back, say ye: "Bear witness that we are Muslims." Surrendering ourselves to God and His Will.*
> —SURA 3:64

It also enjoined the same upon Muslims in a very emphatic manner, for it is put in a prohibitive form:

> *Do not dispute with the People of the Scripture except in the mildest manner save those of them who are aggressors; and say we believe in that which was revealed to you; and our God and your God is but one God and to Him we surrender.*—SURA 29:46

Fundamentally, cooperation is called for because of the fact that there is a kind of unity and oneness between these groups despite their apparent differences. The absolute Sovereign—God—to Whose authority and power we all submit, is one and the same for all. The dignity of man in both conceptions must be preserved and guarded; and the Universe thus conceived becomes a moral Universe. The Muslims, therefore, are enjoined to deal with such people in a mild, gentle and just way unless they are aggressors. Aggression, of course, is to be opposed.

Islam, it seems, has gone a step farther as a practical demonstration of its sincere endeavor to help create universal and everlasting peace. It seems to regulate the relation between man and man as such, regardless of all other considerations, racial or religious differences, when it says:

> *God does not forbid you to be generous and to deal justly with those who have not, on account of your religion, waged war against you and have not driven you out of your homes.*—SURA 60:9

By implication it seems that only one category of people are excluded from receiving this generous treatment: those who have waged war against Muslims or have driven them out of their homes because they are Muslims. From its very inception, the religion of Islam has

made it very clear to its followers that differences of opinion, of ideas, of beliefs and of religion are as natural to man as men are naturally different from one another. Such differences, we are told, are the outcome of differences in understanding and reasoning power, of different character, and different methods of education and up-bringing which each individual receives in his respective environment. The Muslims were made to believe, and act accordingly, that these natural differences should not interfere in any way with the just dealing and the kind of treatment which they ought to give to their brothers in humanity—for all men are brothers by nature. Substantially, they are one and the same, though they differ in respect to modes and accidental tributes. So let not the changing and changeable modes of life affect the essential relations between man and man and create a state of hostility.

This unsurpassed humanistic attitude finds expression in various passages of the Qur'an, from which we cite:

> *O, ye people, verily We have created you from a male and a female and We have distributed you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Verily the most honourable of you in the sight of God is the most pious of you.*—SURA 49:13

This passage is significant in many respects. It is directed, in the first place to mankind, not only to Muslims. It declares that they are all of one and the same category in regard to their creation and beginning. They are created, they are dependent, they are begotten from a male and a female, so they are one and the same in substance with no ground whatsoever for distinction or substantial differences. It indicates, in the second place, that the apparent differences between men are only artificial differences due to different localities, different languages, different climates and environments. It explains, in the third place, that they are widely scattered over the earth, forming nations and tribes and consequently have developed diverse habits and cultures. This diversity and the employment of the various qualities developed by each nation and race through the cultivation of mutual understanding will help to make use of the powers of nature for the benefit of all.

These and similar passages have taught Muslims to look upon differences as something natural which cannot be avoided, and made them, during a period of history when toleration was almost regarded as synonymous with cowardice, tolerant and broadminded. They not

only permitted churches and synagogues to exist but allowed them to flourish and prosper along with the mosques. The bells of the churches ring loudly calling for Christian prayer at the same time the Muezzin is calling from the minaret for Muslim prayer. The same idea finds its further corroboration in the following passages of the Qur'an which leave no doubt that the religion of Islam was eager to cultivate in each individual Muslim a sense of tolerance, thereby preparing him to co-perate with others regardless of how great the differences in culture and ideology might be, so long as the others were willing to live peacefully with him as equals and brothers, and not as superiors or inferiors. These passages are:

And if your God had pleased He would have made all men of one religion, but they do not cease to differ among themselves except upon whom your God has mercy and for this He has created them.
—SURA 11:118

And if your God had pleased, all people on earth would have become believers. Do you therefore forceably compel men to become true believers?—SURA 10:99

Verily, you cannot make whom you like rightly directed but God can make whom He pleases rightly directed.—SURA 28:56

Invite men into the way of your God by wisdom and mild exhortation and dispute them in the kindest manner, for your God best knows those who stray from His Way and He best knows those who have yielded to His guidance, and if you make reprisal then make it proportionate to the injuries inflicted on you, but if you can patiently endure, it will be best for those who are patiently enduring. Endure then with patience, but your patient endurance must be sought in none but God and do not be grieved about the infidels nor be troubled for that which they subtly devise, for God is with those who fear Him and do good deeds.—SURA 16:125-128

The last passage belongs to the "Medina" revelation. It was revealed when the Muslims were rather strong and had power to retaliate and force their own terms, yet they were asked to make no reprisal whenever they could, and employ in their contact with the people of the Scripture, in particular, only the kindest and most humane matters.

Thus, by the injunction of their own religion, Muslims must grow accustomed to deal justly, whenever they are in a position to judge, with different ideologies and different religions. They are enjoined to adapt themselves to all environments, Islamic and non-Islamic alike, and make provisions whenever possible to avoid any kind of hostility,

and not appeal to force before all other means to effect peace are exhausted.

During the Golden Age of their history, that is, in the first five or six centuries of the Muslim era, Muslims faithfully adhered to that ideal tolerance. Their tolerance during that period has become proverbial. Christians and Jews, under the banner of the Muslim State, prospered and flourished, and thus for the first time in history a community of Muslim-Christian brothers existed. This sense of toleration, however, became dimmed when the Muslim power began to decline, when they disintegrated internally and became weakened internationally. Psychologically speaking, it was natural for them to become more sensitive, and they strongly resisted any kind of abuse which, had it been done before, would have provoked no more than a look of pity. The other side also was not cooperative. It did not appreciate the sense of toleration exercised before; thus the situation moved from bad to worse until it culminated in the occupation of almost all Muslim lands by the beginning of the Twentieth Century. At the same time, much European writing misrepresented Islam and Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam.

The lessons which both the Muslims and Christians have learned through their harmonious and hostile relations ought not to be forgotten, and it is now up to them to determine what kind of a world they wish to live in, and act accordingly. They can quarrel and fight with each other, thereby inviting the harsh dictates of an economic determinism, thus bringing to an end the concept of a Universe ruled by ethics and moral law. But they also can, instead of antagonizing each other, stand together to guard and develop their common heritage. For, indeed, the fields of agreement between them, which are too well known to be enumerated here, are much greater than those of disagreement. These fields ought to be explored further, brought into focus, and made conspicuous to our students and youngsters. The fields of disagreement which exist, at least as natural phenomena, should not be exaggerated. In this way, Muslims and Christians can better understand one another.

It behooves me to notice that a new chapter in the annals of the Muslim-Christian relationship has been written recently. The whole atmosphere has begun to change in favor of strengthening that relation. The American Friends of the Middle East, for instance, through its effort to promote the Muslim-Christian Convocation, through its annual conferences, through its publications, has presented Islamic cul-

ture to Westerners in its true perspective; the interest which the American people has recently demonstrated towards Muslim people and Islamic culture and their active cooperation in the activity of the Islamic Center in Washington, D. C., the facilities which the American universities receive in Muslim countries, the Colloquium on Islamic Culture sponsored by the Library of Congress and Princeton University, the Fulbright program, the economic cooperation and help; all these are new movements and are likely to lead to the desired understanding and cooperation. But I still notice that most of these movements are being justified by their utility and expediency for both American and Muslim peoples. I do accept this justification so long as it is considered a first step toward the realization of such cooperation, and not as the final goal. We ought to remember the verse of the Holy Qur'an I have above cited:

And our God and your God is but one God.

This is the cornerstone of Muslim-Christian cooperation. For it clearly explains that the ethical code of life for both of us is fundamentally the same.

I wish, in conclusion, to emphasize that Muslims will always stretch forth their hands towards the Christian people, so long as they are willing to cooperate as equal brothers in the building up of a moral Universe where objective justice, universal peace, fraternity, and brotherhood of mankind prevail and be enjoyed by all.

BRIDGES OF PEACE

By
Dr. Ernest M. Howse

Whether or not it is a pleasure to speak to you today, I find it difficult to determine. Theodore Roosevelt once said that if any speaking were to be done, he wanted to do it, as it is more interesting to talk than to listen. Theodore Roosevelt manifestly could count upon factors which have no relation to me. But however uncertain I may be about any apportionment of pleasure, I am acutely conscious of two facts: first, that to speak to this company on this occasion is a signal honor far greater than I merit; and second, that to speak to any company under the auspices of the American Friends of the Middle East is to awaken within me a quick and moving sense of gratitude.

I cannot speak here without memories of the Convocation at Bhamdoun. And these memories are of an experience by which my heart was touched, my mind broadened and my life permanently enriched. The Bhamdoun Conference is a helpful reminder of how frequently the events that command the headlines are full of sound and fury, signifying nothing, while the decisive influence upon the future is being fashioned in some unregarded place. I have no doubt that when most of the events deemed newsworthy in 1954 have sunk into the sediment of unremembered things, time will have unearthed among her nuggets of gold the record of this first meeting in friendly concourse around a common table, of representatives of the two mightiest religions of mankind.

In a recent article in the English *Observer*, Professor Arnold Toynbee said that as long as twenty-seven years ago he began making notes for his monumental *Study of History*. Pondering on the development of his thinking over the years, he says, "As I have gone on, religion has come to take a more and more prominent place till it stands at the center of the picture." If Professor Toynbee's judgment is correct, then a new adventure in concord between the peoples of the two religions, which together constitute nearly half the population of the world, may have significant consequence for centuries to come.

According to the biblical story, the first human tragedy was the killing of Abel by his brother Cain. That story is the epitome of

human history. God has made men brothers and when the bond of brotherhood is broken, the consequence is chaos and sorrow. The meeting at Bhamdoun meant a new adventure in Brotherhood, an adventure by the only men who can truly understand brotherhood: the men who see themselves and all other men as earthly children of the one Divine Father.

To be sure, we must always be suspicious of people who talk of brotherhood in vague, general terms, but who are always fearful when any hand of fellowship is extended across any boundary of prejudice; and who themselves cannot be a committee of five without causing a disruption. Dickens somewhere speaks of the gentleman who was fond of proclaiming his love to humanity while he was on constantly bad terms with most of his numerous relations. But proper suspicions of a flimsy façade of brotherhood should not forbid us to enter the real temple.

In the quieter days of the last century, William Ward in England, an able apologist for the Roman Catholic faith, after (so it seems to a Protestant) he went over and began to sound his own trumpet on the other side, used to maintain that the real bond of spiritual affinity grew stronger as men grew closer to God; that a richer spiritual kinship was possible between the truly devout Roman Catholic and the truly devout Protestant that between the devout and non-devout Catholic, or the devout and the non-devout Protestant. The truly religious, as he saw, are akin in their conception of life. For them the life is more than meat and the body is more than raiment. Men who underneath all other differences feel, alike, a humble dependence upon God, discover a deeper fellowship of spirit that can possibly exist between men of religious faith and men vacant of religious faith, men whose values extend no further, if I remember aright the phrase of an ancient philosopher, than the life of nutrition and increase and the pleasures of the alimentary canal.

The Convocation at Bhamdoun and the company here today throw Mr. Ward's thesis into vivid relief. There are differences between us; that fact should not be obscured by any triumph of good intention over truth. Muslim-Christian co-operation will be on all the sounder basis because both Muslims and Christians recognize at the start that co-operation and brotherhood need not imply any syncretism of theological creed. There are differences indeed among the Muslims themselves and also among the Christians.

It is told, in a story that many of the Christians at least will recall, how during the last war two chaplains, one a Roman Catholic, the other a Protestant, served in the same unit in the Army with never-failing good will and indeed with mutual admiration. The time came when the Protestant chaplain was transferred elsewhere. So his Roman Catholic friend arranged a farewell dinner with officers of the mess. At the dinner he spoke with feeling of his affection for his brother of the Protestant faith with whom he had worked on terms of such constant friendliness. When he had finished his glowing testimony, he affectionately put his hand on the shoulder of his Protestant colleague and said, "Yes, we have done the Lord's work together; you in your way and I in His."

Probably all of us, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Muslim too, have known something of the same feeling. Nevertheless no conviction that our own company exemplifies the truest and purest development of religious faith need prevent us from recognizing that there are other sheep not of our fold, and that these too have a place in the tender affection of the Father of all mankind.

As we learned at Bhamdoun, though there may be divisions in the realm of theology, there is one place which leaves small room for dispute. It is where an honest friend turns his gaze directly to ours and says, "This is what my religion means to me." In the presence of such witness, humility instructs us to accept that testimony as a truer delineation of the faith it expounds than our external and condescending judgment. I remember with appreciation how in the course of an informative and illuminating address at Bhamdoun, Dr. Khalifeh Abdul Hakim, Director of the Institute of Islamic Culture at Lahore, Pakistan, summed up the essence of Islamic faith in thirteen points. It might be said that he didn't do quite as good as Moses who got his down to ten. Nevertheless, the thirteen steps provide material for plenty of reflection among Christians. As they are brief, I may take the liberty of reading them to you:

1. Belief in one Supreme Being, the benevolent creator and sustainer of the Universe.
2. Belief in the unity of all creation in spite of its multiplicity.
3. Belief in eternal verities whose knowledge and incorporation in life sums up all true religion.
4. Belief in the essential unity of humanity.
5. Belief in the Infinite Unseen.

6. Belief in the eternal moral order.
7. Belief in the survival of the human ego, as a center of value.
8. Belief in the capacity of unbiased reason to apprehend the eternal laws of existence.
9. Belief in the harmony of Reason and Revelation.
10. Belief in freedom as the essence of the human spirit.
11. Belief in individual responsibility.
12. Belief in the remedial and ameliorative power of prayer.
13. Belief in the infinite enrichment of life if it is rooted in God.

In the minds of many Christians as Dr. Hakim read these points, there came, I am sure, the same thought that came to me: This is a highly idealized interpretation of Islam and is at a conspicuous remove from the contemporary witness of Islam in Egypt and Pakistan. My train of thought, however, was soon thrown off that complacent track. Dr. Hakim went on to say, "The number of Muslims who have rightly understood and imbibed the spirit of Islam is as small as the number of Christians who have a true vision of the spirit of Christ. . . . The Muslims have to be converted to Islam as the Christians have to be converted to Christianity."

It might be affirmed that Dr. Hakim's interpretation of Islam represents a renaissance and reformation of Islamic ideas. That affirmation would be no adverse criticism. Every religion, fortunately, has its periodic movements of renaissance and reformation. But I can go back far beyond Dr. Hakim to a Muslim philosopher who wrote before William the Conqueror moved over to the dark islands of the North Sea:

> God has created the spirit of man out of a crop of His own life, his destiny is to return to it. Do not deceive yourself with the vain imagination that it will die when the body dies. The form you had on your entrance into this world and your present form are not the same. Hence there is no necessity of your perishing on account of the perishing of your body. Your spirit came into this world a stranger. It is only sojourning in a temporary home. From the trials and tempests of this troublesome life, our refuge is in God. In re-union with Him we shall find eternal rest, a rest without sorrow, a joy without pain, a strength without infirmity, a knowledge without doubt, a tranquil yet an ecstatic vision of the source of life and light and glory, of the source from which we came.

When Muslims can speak in such terms, Christians can scarcely help feeling that though the adherents of the two Faiths may be sepa-

rated by almost impenetrable hedges, yet we are all together in the one territory; and that the real division, the great gulf, is fixed between that territory and the realm from which God has been excluded.

In another address at Bhamdoun, Judge Subhi Mahmassani warmly declared:

> It is not disagreement between Islam and Christianity which is the cause of injustices and disorder in the world, the cause lies in the disagreement or difference between theory and practice. . . . Whenever the cause is remedied, we can join together in proclaiming glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.

When the Christian hears such witness, he becomes more sensitively aware how wide and how significant is the area within which Christian and Muslim can say to each other in the words of John Wesley, "Is thy heart as my heart, then give my thy hand."

As those of us who now come from what is called the Christian West meet with those who come from that great stretch of territory across the center of the earth called the Muslim world, we cannot forget the debt of our civilization to other and earlier civilizations indigenous to the areas which have nurtured the Muslim faith. Especially we cannot forget our debt to that extraordinary section of the world's surface between the two great rivers, the Nile and the Euphrates, that fertile crescent which was the birthplace not only of the three great religions of the "Peoples of the Book"—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—but also of all civilization and probably of man himself. We remember that Egypt and Mesopotamia—Iraq, we call it today—had highly developed civilizations thousands of years before the discovery of America. We remember that Persia—now called Iran—and Arabia have both produced empires with far-reaching effects upon every subsequent society. Especially we remember the contribution to our civilization of the genius which flowered in Arabia. At the peak of their greatness, the Arabs were not only the mightiest warriors of their day but the foremost scientists of their age and, at that time, of any age. We do not forget that they were the schoolmasters to Western Europe, that they taught us much of present-day science. We do not forget that the first astronomical observatory in Europe was an Arab observatory in Spain; and that we still refer to heavenly bodies, for example, Scorpion, by Arab fancies. We do not forget that the first medical college in Europe was an Arab college at Salerno, Italy; that the Arabs were the first to make medicine a science and

issued pharmacopoeias, that they pioneered in chemistry and were the first to isolate sulphuric acid, nitric acid and alcohol; that they were the first to construct tables of specific gravity, the first to find solution of quadratic equations and of cubic equations.

And we who are proud of the tongue which Shakespeare spoke cannot forget his debt and ours to Arabic literature. Before there was a library in Western Europe, there was an Arab library in Cairo with 100,000 volumes, 6,000 on astronomy. An American lady who spent thirty years in the Middle East told me that whenever she comes back and speaks to school children, she begins by asking them how many Arabic words they know. They are as non-plussed as if she asked them how many Tibetan words they knew. Then she begins: *algebra, alcohol, alchemy, admiral.* She can go on through alphabet: *coffee, cotton, muslin, magazine,* almost *ad infinitum.* She makes it clear that each one of us every day acknowledges in his common speech his debt to Arabia.

H. G. Wells properly salutes the Arabs as "The torchbearers of civilization to the western world."

Yet, strange to say, despite our common spiritual lineage in the prophets of the Old Testament, and despite the debt of western civilization to the civilization arising from Muslim culture, there have existed for a thousand years between the Christian and Muslim prejudices and hostilities which have seemed ineradicable. Hence, one of the primary satisfactions of having a part in this Muslim-Christian adventure is the knowledge that in so doing we may be helping in part to dissolve those prejudices and hostilities, and in a phrase from the memorable Christmas address delivered only a few weeks ago by His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, to thrust out towards each other "bridges of peace."

Today Muslim and Christian alike face a philosophy of life which indeed is now incarnate in the communist state, but which may become incarnate in other states, and which is more fundamental than any form of government, a philosophy which threatens all spiritual faiths. Facing that philosophy we ought to be willing to reflect upon our spiritual lineage, to consider our spiritual resources and to unite our efforts to preserve them. We cannot dissolve all our differences but we would be wise to celebrate some of our unities. Remembering the homely maxim of Benjamin Franklin we may resolve to hang together lest we hang separately.

A minister who had not previously been in a mental hospital was once walking with the doctor through an institution which housed many hundreds of people mentally sick and disabled. In one ward were people who were physically dangerous; yet, though there were a considerable number of them, the minister was astonished at the small number of attendants who were in charge. He said to the doctor, "What if they should unite?" The doctor replied, "Lunatics never unite." Confronting the world of today, we might say, "*Only lunatics* never unite." Christian and Muslim threatened by an enemy which both so properly fear, may feel like the two naval officers on the flagship *Victory* who had bitterly quarreled and who, on the eve of Trafalgar, were summoned to the cabin of Nelson. The admiral waved in the direction of the French fleet and said, "Gentlemen, shake hands, there is only one foe."

We must, it is well to repeat, keep clear in our minds that the foe is not a government but a philosophy. We must also be careful not to base our desire for union on the treacherous foundation of common fear, but rather upon the bedrock support of spiritual faith; upon our common belief in God, our common belief in the dignity of all men as the children of God; and our common hope that if we work together we can make a worthier home for all mankind in this planet which God himself has set aside as His own little garden among the stars.

In the bleak days of World War II, that great soul, William Temple, who was being enthroned as Archbishop of Canterbury, spoke not of the bombs that were bursting around him in Britain and not of the threat which then laid its shadow upon his island home and upon all the earth. He spoke rather of the ecumenical movement with Christianity which was drawing people from all the ends of the earth into a new sense of spiritual unity. He said that this was "the great new fact of our time." When one thinks how fateful may be the consequences of spiritual fellowship between the great masses of people who in Islam and in Christianity together confront the gathering threat of a godless philosophy and the living death of a godless world, one may wonder if that convention in Lebanon may not prove to be the beginning of a great new fact of tomorrow.

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